

REMARKS

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons that follow.

Status of Claims:

Claims 1-8 and 12 are currently being canceled without prejudice or disclaimer, in order to obtain a quick allowance of this application, whereby Applicant intends to prosecute some or all of these claims in a continuation or divisional application to be filed in the future.

No claims are currently being amended.

No claims are currently being added.

This amendment cancels claims in this application. A detailed listing of all claims that are, or were, in the application, irrespective of whether the claim(s) remain under examination in the application, is presented, with an appropriate defined status identifier.

After amending the claims as set forth above, claims 9-11 are now pending in this application.

Consideration of Information Disclosure Statement:

The Examiner is requested to evidence consideration of the references submitted in an Information Disclosure Statement (IDS) filed on November 22, 2000, by returning an initialed copy of the Form PTO-1449 submitted with that IDS.

Allowable Subject Matter:

Applicant appreciates the indication in the Office Action that claims 9-11 are allowed, as well as the indication that claims 2, 5 and 8 contain allowable subject matter.

Claims Rejection:

In the Office Action, claims 1, 3, 4, 6, 7 and 12 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Shimazaki. Due to the cancellation of these claims, this rejection is now moot.

Conclusion:

Since there are no other objections or rejections raised in the Office Action, Applicant believes that the present application is now in condition for allowance, and an early indication of allowance is respectfully requested.

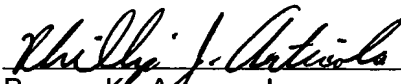
The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required regarding this application under 37 C.F.R. §§ 1.16-1.17, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. Should no proper payment be enclosed herewith, as by a check being in the wrong amount, unsigned, post-dated, otherwise improper or informal or even entirely missing, the Commissioner is authorized to charge the unpaid amount to Deposit Account No. 19-0741. If any extensions of time are needed for timely acceptance of papers submitted herewith, Applicant hereby petitions for such extension under 37 C.F.R. §1.136 and authorizes payment of any such extensions fees to Deposit Account No. 19-0741.

Respectfully submitted,

Date September 3, 2004

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